ARAMBEE FLAME

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BEYOND SANTA

Brothers and Sisters, xmas is fast approaching. H.A.C.O. takes this opportunity to wish you a merry celebration of the birth of Jesus, the man whom we have been led to believe was both white and the son of God(despite considerable evidence to the contrary).

We urge you to go out to the white folks department stores and spend all the money you cannot afford to spend or don't have. For those of you who happen to make enough money to have a decent credit rating, we urge you to get more deeply in debt so that you can buy the most ridiculous gimmicks for your children that Madison Avenue has devised, but mainly so that you can contribute to the wealth of those who already have it.

We would say "don't blame Desenex" but feet have nothing to do with this. Rather, don't blame us when your children come back from some neighbor's house on xmas day with that look in their eyes that lets you know immediately that the neighbor's kids got more than your's did and gives you the feeling that maybe you're inadequate as a parent.

Isn't it a joy to work and sacrifice for practically everyone's interests but your own and that of your family and community?

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KWANZAA

"The idea of 'Kwanzaa' comes from the harvest celebrations in traditional African societies, but the symbols and concepts come from our needs, conditions and development as Afro-American people. For example, Kwanzaa has seven basic symbols and two supplemental ones

(Con't. on p. 4)

THE MARVA COLLINS STORY/TRULY SUCCESS?

On the evening of December 1st., CBS aired "Welcome to Success/The Marva Collins Story." This production was based the actual struggle of an American-born Afrikan school teacher in Chicago to bring quality education to American-born Afrikan children by running her own school. The CBS production, with Cicely Tyson starring as Marva Collins, was a very moving and sensitive treatment of Sister Collins' struggle, that of her family, and the meeting of the challenge of education by her students. The scholastic achievements of her students, in reality, have been remarkable.

We are compelled to applaud what Sister Collins was able to do insofar as the academic successes of her students is concerned. It is hoped that her school will continue to thrive. However, we should not be too quick, either on the basis of the CBS production or on other information which has been given in regards Sister Collins' school, to heap unqualified praise.

At one point in "The Marva Collins Story" a student responded to a question in non-American-standardized English. "Marva" told the student that what he had said was Black axiomatic slang and went on to tell him, though politely, that he was not to use such language. A couple of years ago the actual Marva Collins, in the course of a "60 Minutes" interview, was questioned as to what she thought about "Black English." She expressed the view that "Black English" was slang and that it had no place in school.

Whether we choose to call it slang or not, the fact is that "Black English" is as integral a part of our culture as are, for example, Jazz and Blues.

"Prisoner's T.V. Blues"

It was twelve-ten when my troubles began
I was lying in my cell checking out my television
When the guard stops by with a bad opinion
He said my television was too loud
So I complied and turned it down.
He stood and watched as the volume decreased
As I wished to myself he should decease
He left and came back in five
And said my volume was immensely alive
He ordered me to turn it down
But I refused for he was acting a clown
I know I didn't touch the knob
I realized he used bad discretion on the job
He said he would put me on report
And I knew then we'd settle it in court
I went to court but not by myself
I had two witnesses
One from my right and another from my left
As we told them the story all true and well
They looked at us as though to say "go to hell."
But when he told his story so full of lies
They looked at him with tears in their eyes
Well I was convicted as tried
But they will not destroy my pride
For I knew that I was right
And maybe tomorrow I'll have a better night
They told me I could appeal
But there's no justice in this deal.

-Eugene Hunt

"Editorial Reply"

now i don't know too much 'bout this particular case
and be it far from me to make a judgement in haste
but one thing for sure that need be made clear
injustice is a thing that's quite common in here
so eugene may be standing on rock-solid ground
when he says to us that he's been messed around
however my friends and this has to be said
some folks like to sleep when they're lying in bed
but we got some dudes as you might well expect
who don't know how to give others respect
radios, tape decks, televisions as well
they turn up the volume so they're noisy as hell
other dudes be trying to read, maybe study for class
or listen to their own music to make the time pass
it don't make no difference, no never mind
we should not have to be bothered all the damned time
by dudes, it appears, who just haven't learned
how to give other folks any concern
we try to be patient 'bout these loud-ass sounds
but sometimes we ask these clowns to turn their stuff down
i'll tell you the truth, it don't do no good
talking to them is like talking to wood
so if it takes a guard to get us some quiet
it's okay with us who've unsuccessfully tried it
and here we are at the end of this tale
about living with fools while you're being in jail
it is a shame and a pitiful crime
the disrespect given to those doing time
by others of whom in the same situation
treat us same as the guards with their fool inclinations.

-David L. Rice

MARVA COLLINS (Cont.)

As such, it is valid. American-born Afrikan students should not be put down, no matter how gently, for using it. Rather, it should be explained to them that they must also use "White English" and learn to speak it proficiently for the practical reason that they will need it in order to get what they need from that white world "outside."

In a related matter, it should be noted that at no time in "The Marva Collins Story," midst all the talk of Plato, Socrates, Shakespeare, and other historical figures, was any Afrikan--American-born or otherwise--mentioned, at least as I recall. Whether this is indicative of Sister Collins' school in actuality is unknown(to me). The issue, insofar as this question and that of the Sister's attitude toward "Black English," is that, while we desperately need more doctors, lawyers, scientists, and other professionals; we have a far greater need for professionals who have a frame of reference that is inclusive of the collective interests/needs of Afrikan people.

-the editor

FROM OTHER SOURCES

ON THE CRIMINAL CODE REFORM ACT(1981)

"Among the bill's features are:

-Elimination of the First Amendment defense to a charge of criminal contempt;
-Virtual elimination of sex discrimination as a civil rights crime;
-A new preventive detention section allowing judges to deny bail on the basis of alleged danger to the community;
-Narrower safeguards against admission of confessions as evidence against a defendant;
-Broader offenses of solicitation, obstructing a government function by physical interference and dissemination of obscene materials.

"....The National Committee Against Repressive Legislation reports that the bill is due to be voted upon by the full Senate in early 1982...."

(excerpted from THE GUARDIAN; Dec. 2, 1981)

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WHAT TALE DO THESE FIGURES TELL?

(The following figures are taken from a recently released study by the Census Bureau, Dept. of Commerce.)

-The divorce ratio for American-born Afrikan women rose from 104 per 1,000 in 1970 to 257 per 1,000 in 1980;
-The combined divorce ratio for American-born Afrikan men and women in 1980 was 203 per 1,000, nearly double that of whites;
-The percentage of American-born Afrikan children under the age of 18 who lived with one parent went from 32% in 1970 to 46% in 1980.

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IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH

-According to Dr. George Lythcott, director of the U.S. Health Services Administration, some 231 urban hospitals were closed or relocated from 1975 to 1977. A whopping 47% of the closed hospitals were located in neighborhoods that are 65% to 100% Black.
-Though corresponding figures for whites are not presently available, there has been an 8% rise in cancer cases among Blacks since the 1950's and 25% increase in Black cancer mortality.
-According to a 1978 Social Security Administration report, Black workers were 50% more likely than whites to be severely disabled from job injuries or illness.
-As of April 1980, 375,811 doctors were in this country. Of that number only 2% were Black. The Dept. of Health and Human Services shows that there are 136 doctors to every 100,000 in this country. Still, there are only 26 Black physicians to every 100,000 Blacks. And most Black people are treated by Black physicians.

(excerpted from N.Y. AMSTERDAM NEWS; Nov. 7, 1981)

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"THE BEST MAN"

In the world the black woman comes from, the best man is defined automatically as the man with the most money and "power" that he can get. In the ghetto, this is often the pimp, the drug dealer, the numbers runner, the common theif, but he might as well be(and is for middle-class black girls) the public official; the highly paid executive in the poverty structure; the Scotch-drinking, self-absorbed doctor, lawyer, professor, entertainer whose only concern is with his summer home, his Mercedes-Benz, his bank account, his Gucci shoes, and the lightness of his wife's skin.

(excerpted from BLACK MACHO ...by Michele Wallace

FROM ME TO YOU

I'm not a woman to be controlled,
listen to my words and take hold.
I'm strong
though it might not appear to be,
I don't let mankind control me
unless
unless I want it to be.
Still in my heart
it is not for me.

Mankind
Mankind everywhere listen to me,
I'm a Black woman crying out in need.
I need you
I need you to feel my agony,
to believe that it is real.

I've seen Blackmen
stripped of their identity,
oh man
oh man
that truly bother me
to see a Blackman so loving
and so strong
turn into something that don't belong.

And that's why I'm singing this song,
because we
as Black persons
do belong,
but not in this society
because the rules all are wrong,
and someday we
as Black persons
will be strong.

I don't want to become bitter
and treat mankind like trash because
in this world of games
whiteman tames.

I want to treat a brother
like a brother
and not do it undercover.

I don't want mankind to undermine me
because
where I stand is where I should be.

To control me,
to control me
is not going to be.

-Thelma McCray

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and each represents values and concepts vital to Afro-American liberation and development, not simply what might have been their value, if they existed, to continental Africans." -Dr. M. Ron Karenga

Kwanzaa is celebrated from December 26th. through January 1st. The seven basic symbols are:

-mazao(crops) symbolice of the traditional harvest celebrations and of the rewards of collective and productive labor
-mkeka(mat) symbolic of the historical foundations upon which we build
-kinara(candleholder) symbolic of our roots/ancestors
-vibunzi(ears of corn) symbolic of our children and our future
-zawadi(gifts) symbolic of the labor, love, and commitments that make up family living
-kikombe cha umoja(unity cup) symbolic of the principle and practice of unity
-mishumaa saba(the seven candles) symbolic of "nguzo saba," the seven principles: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purposes, creativity, and faith.

The two supplementary symbols are the black, red, and green flag and a copy of the seven principles.

Let your children know that we are about more than fat men with red suits and white beards. If you give gifts, you be the producer of them. Write a poem for a friend, make something with your hands, put your soul into whatever it is. Clebrate Kwanzaa and make it meaningful.

-the editor